

**SYMBOLS OF LIFE AND EPHEMERALITY:
THE “POMEGRANATE” OF UZBEKISTAN AND THE “CHERRY BLOSSOM”
OF JAPAN**

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The aim of this study is to make an attempt to define and compare the two different yet relevant symbols a reader can notice in Uzbek and Japan literature, and is to explain how they function in different literary contexts. Also, it gives information on the effects these symbols produce on the readers. These different symbols are tools of language that are used by writers and authors of Uzbekistan and Japan to deliver hidden meaning, uniqueness, color and emotional state in the language. The expressive means of a language can mainly be noticed in a literary language and are rare in ordinary speech. In many literary cases, these symbols are deliberately selected to create a certain stylistic effect. The aim of this paper is to discuss some literary symbols and how and what impact they have on the reader they have, as well as differences of them between Japan and Uzbek literature. The discussion is provided by definitions of stylistic devices, their nature, functions and the special effects they produce in literary texts.

Introduction

Literature works as a language of symbols, not just words on a page. Writers and poets use elements from nature and culture - flowers, fruits, animals, trees - to express complex human experiences in ways that resonate deeply. These natural objects become literary symbols that reflect how different cultures see the world. Two striking examples are the

pomegranate in Uzbek literature and the cherry blossom in Japanese poetry. Both symbolize life, but in very different ways: the pomegranate represents fertility and abundance, while the cherry blossom captures fragility and the fleeting nature of existence. Literary symbols are countless, but this paper will focus on several that appear frequently in both Uzbek and Japanese literature. When relevant, specific examples will be examined to show how writers use these symbols in their work.

Discussion and Analysis

The Pomegranate in Uzbek Literature. The pomegranate, called anor in Uzbek, holds a special place in Uzbekistan's folklore, oral traditions, and poetry. Its round form filled with countless seeds represents unity in diversity, abundance, and prosperity. In folk tales, the pomegranate often appears as a blessed gift, a symbol of wealth, or a way to describe beauty. The popular saying "Anor donasi - ko'p, barakasi undan ham ko'p" ("The pomegranate has many seeds, but its blessings are even more") shows how deeply valued this fruit is in the culture. Poets use the pomegranate to express love and passion. The vivid red of its seeds suggests both desire and life force. In some poems, giving someone a pomegranate is like giving them your heart. So, in Uzbek literature, the pomegranate is much more than just a fruit - it embodies life itself, fertility, and the bonds that connect people. In contrast, the cherry blossom (sakura) stands as one of the most cherished symbols in Japanese literature. People admire these blossoms for their delicate beauty, but what makes them truly meaningful is how briefly they last. They bloom brilliantly for just a short time before the wind scatters their petals, which has turned them into a powerful metaphor for impermanence.

Japanese poets, particularly those writing haiku and tanka, use sakura to reflect on life's brevity and the certainty of change. This view is deeply connected to Buddhist philosophy, where cherry blossoms serve as a gentle reminder that all beauty fades. Matsuo Bashō captured this feeling in a well-known haiku: the image of falling petals becomes a meditation on passing time and the fragile nature of human life. For the Japanese, the cherry blossom isn't just a flower - it's a call to appreciate the present moment, knowing that nothing lasts forever. In Uzbek Literature, Alisher Navoi (1441–1501). Navoi often used rich natural imagery in his ghazals. In one poem, the pomegranate appears as a metaphor for the beloved's lips and vitality:

“Your lips are like a pomegranate, red with the fire of passion,
Every seed within it a drop of love's wine.”

This imagery above indicates the fruit to love, beauty, and overflowing abundance. Alisher Navoi uses pomegranate symbol to deliver the concept of beauty and elegance, as well as redness of the character's lips in the view that the reader comprehends the imagery of the description. In Uzbek Folk Tradition. In oral literature, the pomegranate is a symbol of fertility and blessing. For example, in a folk tale, a barren woman prays for a child and is given a pomegranate; when she eats it, she conceives. This story reflects the fruit's role as a sign of life and prosperity.

Cherry Blossom in Japanese Literature. Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694), Bashō's haiku captures the fleeting beauty of sakura:

“How many, many things
They call to mind -
These cherry blossoms.”

Here, blossoms become a trigger for memory and reflection, symbolizing the impermanence of life.

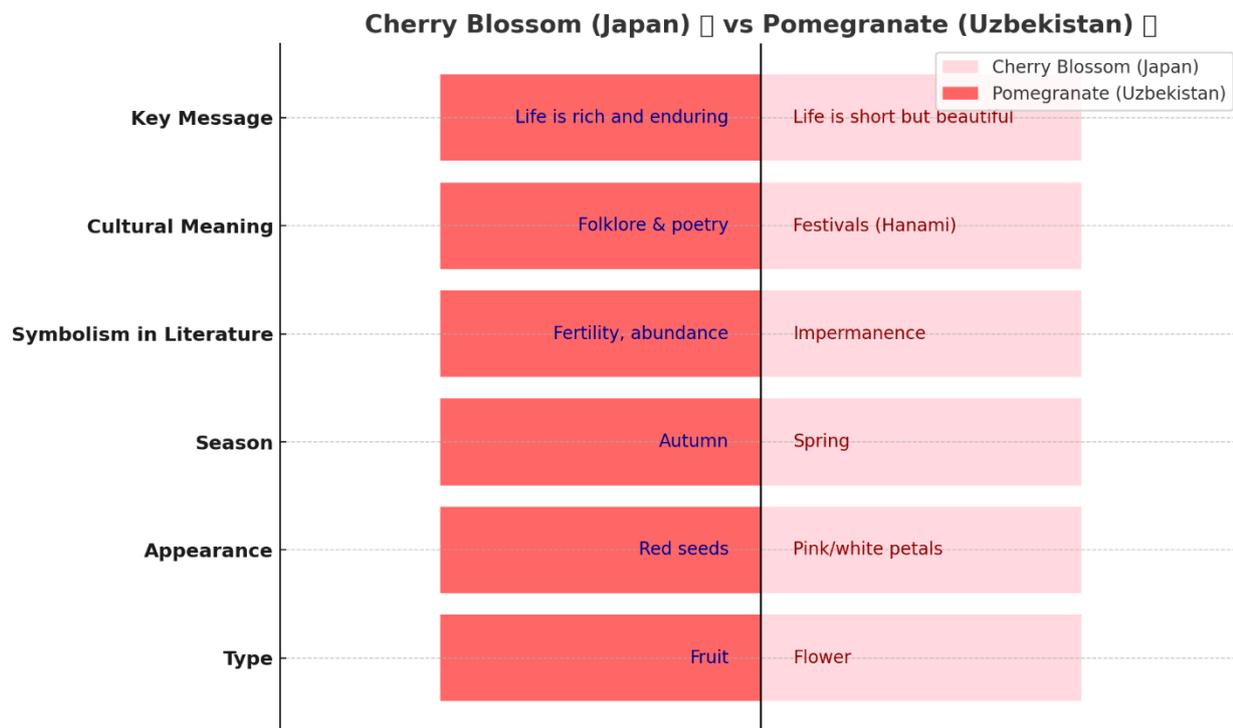
Kobayashi Issa (1763–1828) links cherry blossoms to the fragility of existence:

“Under the cherry blossoms,
Nobody is
A total stranger.”

The blossoms create unity but also remind readers of shared mortality. The Tale of Genji (Murasaki Shikibu, 11th c.) In one scene, cherry blossoms fall around the prince and his lovers, symbolizing both the beauty of the moment and the fleeting nature of love.

I believe these are the reasons why writers used these literary signs: Pomegranate (Uzbekistan): Grows abundantly in Central Asia, naturally tied to fertility, family, and abundance. Its many seeds inspire literary associations with unity and prosperity. Cherry Blossom (Japan): Blooms briefly in spring, reflecting the Buddhist principle of mujō (impermanence). Its fleeting beauty makes it an ideal metaphor for life's fragility.

Comparison of Signs



Though the pomegranate and cherry blossom are completely different in form - one a fruit filled with seeds, the other a delicate flower - both represent humanity's effort to find meaning in the natural world. The Uzbek pomegranate speaks to life's richness, prosperity, and the continuity that passes from one generation to the next. The Japanese cherry blossom, meanwhile, captures life's transience, the beauty of fleeting moments, and coming to terms with mortality.

This difference reflects deeper worldviews. Uzbek literary tradition values continuity and abundance, shaped by a culture centered on family, fertility, and the thriving networks of the Silk Road. Japanese literary tradition focuses on impermanence and spiritual contemplation, influenced by Buddhist philosophy and a refined sensitivity to nature's passing beauty.

Together, these symbols demonstrate how literature can transform simple natural objects into powerful cultural expressions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the pomegranate of Uzbekistan and the cherry blossom of Japan may grow in different soils and climates, but both carry deep cultural meaning in their respective literatures. They show us not only how two nations understand life, but also how people across different cultures turn to nature to express universal truths. One celebrates fertility and lasting abundance, the other fragility and brief beauty -yet both remind us that life, in all its forms, is precious.

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